

The Holy Experience

by Neale Donald Walsch

Chapter One

All of my life I have been seeking the Holy Experience. All of my life I have known that the Holy Experience would reveal everything. Everything about God, everything about life, and everything about me. The only questions for me have been, what is the Holy Experience, and where can I find it?

Those questions have been asked by people all over the world since the beginning of time. Perhaps you have asked those questions, too. This book is the short story of how I found my answers. By telling you this story, perhaps I can help you to find your answers, too.

I hope you will forgive me, then, if I place before you in this book some brief narratives of my life. I know that many of you have read one or more of my previous books, and so you may already have a few of these facts and details. But if you will indulge me, I want to create a context here, in this book, within which the remainder of the messages placed here might be considered and experienced. And from time to time a brief excursion into my own past may prove instructive, even if, for you, it is a revisiting of information you already have about me.

I began my search for the Holy Experience by looking where one might be expected to look. I began by looking to religion. It is entirely understandable that I would do that. I was born into a family that believed in religion as a means of getting to heaven. I was raised a Roman Catholic, and by age seven I had a deep and abiding faith in God. I did not doubt for a moment God's existence or God's benevolence.

By age 10 I also did not doubt God's wrath.

I was not taught much about God's wrath at home. In fact, I was taught absolutely nothing about it. I think now, as I look back on it, that my mother did not believe in it. If my father did, he bowed to my mother's wishes not to "tell the kids about it" until it was time.

It was when I was sent to parochial school—St. Ignatius Elementary, on 36th and Mitchell, in Milwaukee—that I learned about a God who could become angry. It was there that I learned about the Ten Commandments. It was there that I learned about sin and punishment. It was there that I learned how to make a Perfect Act of Contrition ("Oh, my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee...") in case I was in a car accident and found myself near death, or for some other reason discovered myself facing Judgment Day at an inopportune moment, not having gone to Confession for a while...

Confession was a big thing to me. We were told at St. Ignatius to go to Confession at least once a week. Saturday was the day set aside in our parish, as it is in most, so that one could receive Holy Communion at Mass on Sunday.

This is where the idea of my own imperfection first came up, as I recall. This is where I picked up the thought that my soul must be "clean" before God would

allow me to receive Him under my roof.

Until then I never had any doubt that all I had to do if I wanted God near me as to call out to Him. He would always be there, Mom told me, and I believed her. How could Mom be wrong about a thing like that? How could Mom be wrong about anything?

Then I got to St. Ignatius and the nuns told me that, well, it wasn't exactly like that. God wants to come to me whenever I call to Him, they assured me, but God cannot be received by an impure soul. Who has an impure soul? I asked. All of us, I was told. We all have impure souls. None of us are worthy of receiving God into our lives.

How can we become worthy? I desperately wanted to know. I'd thought that God would come to us always. In fact, I'd been taught by my Mom that God was with us always, and that all we had to do to receive God's help and blessing in any moment was to call out to the God who was Always There, and that help would be ours. Now I was being told, "well, not exactly..."

I had to be worthy of receiving God under my roof. And the problem was, I was born unworthy. It was at St. Ignatius that I learned about Original Sin, and about how I was a sinner every day, and about how God could not come into my soul if I was a sinner, but not to be dismayed, because God could forgive me my sins, and then come into my soul—but first, I had to confess them.

God could not forgive sins that were not confessed. Hence, the Sacrament of Confession was created by the Most Holy Roman Catholic Church as a means to Salvation. If we confessed our sins, God would forgive them, rendering our souls pure again, wiping the slate clean, as it were. We could then go to Communion. We could receive the living God into our lives through consuming the literal flesh of Christ, who was God's son and who died for our sins.

Confession, as you might now be able to see, suddenly became very important to me. I went as often as I could, the better to make sure that I had no sins on my soul should death come knocking at my door.

As a child I was nervous about this. You may think that I am kidding here, or exaggerating a little, but I'm not. I clearly remember being afraid to go to sleep at night, especially if I knew that I had been a particularly bad boy that day. If I had talked back to Mom, quarreled with my brother, or in some other way had behaved inappropriately, I earnestly prayed as I squeezed shut my frightened eyes...

**Now I lay me down to sleep.
I pray the Lord my soul to keep.
And if I die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take.**

I hoped that my earnestness would earn me what my behavior had not.

Part of my nervousness stemmed from the fact that I was not sure which behaviors really offended God enough to keep me out of heaven forever (dooming me to

everlasting torture in hell), which would send me to purgatory for only a temporary (if painful) period of exclusion, and which might be overlooked altogether.

(Were any overlooked? That was a question I remember asking. Did God overlook anything? Was my every thought, word, and deed to be judged? The answers I was given led me to believe this was the case. Who wouldn't be nervous under those conditions?)

And so, I tried very hard to be holy. To be holy, I believed, was to be without sin. It was to live a life without offending God.

Thus, I went to Mass several times a week. I went to Confession often. I prayed to God every night. I walked around the playground with a crucifix tucked in my belt. I became an altar boy. I memorized every prayer there was to memorize. Not just the Our Father and the Hail Mary, but the Glory Be, the Act of Contrition, and the Apostle's Creed. And I had determined in the 7th grade that I was going to become a priest.

I was going all the way.

My search for the Holy Experience had begun.

Chapter Two

I wish I could tell you that in the ensuing years I had a wonderful and fulfilling experience of God. I did not.

My first obstacle was my father. When I told him while I was in the 7th grade that I wanted to enter the seminary he made it clear to me in no uncertain terms that that was not going to happen.

"You're not old enough to make that decision," he told me. "When you are, we can talk about it."

I now understood what that was all about. At the time, I did not. I saw my father as cruel and even "anti-God." I could not understand what he had against my entering the seminary.

In the 7th and 8th grade of Catholic parochial school the priests and nuns really start talking up the priesthood to the guys. If a fellow has any kind of piety at all, this can suddenly start looking like a very attractive option. In my case, it had become something that I had to do.

The sisters all agreed that I had "the calling." I served at Mass every morning, and it was not lost on the priests and nuns how earnestly I prayed, how I had completely memorized the altar boy's responses in Latin, and how I had "taken" to the whole business of God and the Church.

My father was clear that it was the business of these schools to steer as many young boys into thoughts of the seminary as possible. Dad knew that I knew nothing of females - and he was also smart enough to understand that until I did, any decision about moving into a line of work that required me to be celibate all my life was premature.

He was, of course, dead right. Somewhere during the eighth grade I saw my first picture of a woman without clothing. I know, I know, that was late, relatively speaking, in the life of a boy, but you have to remember that this was in the Fifties, and things were a lot different then. A year later, as a freshman in high school, I actually saw a real, live girl naked. She, too, was a high school freshman, and we had gotten into a little mischief together. Nothing serious, really. Just a little show-and-tell. But it sure took my mind off the priesthood.

Still, I remained enamored of religion itself as an institution. I may not become a priest, I thought, but I will always be devoted to God.

It didn't take long for me to realize that I was not going to find it possible to remain devoted to God through organized religion. Many people have, of course, and so this is not an indictment of religion. It is simply that I could not find my own way to the Holy Experience, I could not get in touch with the Transcendent Reality, through this vehicle.

Religion, to me, presented too many complications, and I experienced the Transcendent Reality as Without Complication. Indeed, it was Utter Simplicity. Religion, to me, generated too many conflicts, and I experienced the Transcendent Reality as Without Conflict. Indeed, it was Total Peace. Religion, to me, offered too many contradictions with my own inner truth, and I experienced the Transcendent Reality as Without Contradiction. Indeed, it was Absolute Harmony.

Utter Simplicity, Total Peace, Absolute Harmony. That is how I experienced God. Religion did not. I soon found this out.

The how's and why's of my personal experience do not seem so important now. It seems sufficient to note in broad general terms that the singular difficulty I had with religion was its insistence on teaching of a needy God - indeed, an angry, vindictive and violent God - who was going to punish me for my sins—and, indeed, punish all the world.

I simply did not experience God in that way. Chalk it up to my mother's early teachings, perhaps, but for some reason my internal guidance system kept steering me away from such an idea about God.

I searched everywhere within the religions of my culture, but could find no place of comfort. Then I explored the religions of other cultures. Still no simplicity, peace, and harmony. Finally, I left religion altogether.

It would be a quarter of a century before I returned to a deep and abiding faith in God, born of a new *understanding* of God that changed everything in my perception of who and what God is.

How that came to pass is described in *Conversations with God - Book 1* and in the semi-autobiographical *Friendship with God*. The simple and peaceful and harmonious answer I came to is articulated wonderfully in *What God Wants*.

So what have I learned through my conversations with God, my friendship with God, and my experience of communion with God?

I have learned what the Holy Experience is. And I have learned how to move into that experience at will. I have not yet learned, however, how to sustain it. I can't see to "hang onto" it through the whole of my life. In-deed, I'm not even sure if I want to.

All of this is what will be discussed here. And all of this discussion will, I hope, help you in moving closer to your own experience, in unveil-ing your own truth, about these things.

I should like now to begin this discussion with my definition of the Holy Experience, which kind of seeped out of me unexpectedly only re-cently, as I was responding to a question emailed to me by a man in Maine. Let me share with you here that question and answer, and you'll see what I mean.

(The question at first seems to have nothing to do with the topic at hand. But wait. It was in the process of responding to the question that my definition of the Holy Experience popped out. See what you think.)

Hi Neale...I have been struggling recently with what "mission" means in a pluralistic world. Mission has had so many different objectives through- out his-tory - converting others to the "true" faith; extending God's kingdom; doing jus-tice for the poor and marginalized, etc.

Our world seems very near-sighted when people consider their faith the "true" faith and others as condemned to Hell. Since all of us have a some-what different conception of what "faith" means, what is each per-son's responsibility to other peoples- both people of other faiths and people of no faith?

Should we try to show others what we consider "true", or should we only try to share with others, learn from them, and build reciprocal friendships? What does it mean to be a person of faith- ie. Christian, Buddhist, Muslim, or otherwise- in a pluralistic world?

Thanks for any comments or insights you may have Neale!

Matt, Natick, MA

Dear Matt... The only True Mission is the mission of the individual soul. Every other mission is an extension of that. The mission of the indi-vidual soul is to know itself as it truly is, in its own experience. This is ac-complished by creating itself as that. Life is not a process of discovery, it is a process of creation.

The hitch here is that, in Ultimate Reality, it is not possible to create anything, because everything that ever was, is now, and ever will be has already been created. So the Process of Creation turns out to be, after all, not actually Creation, but

Perception. It is about seeing what has always been there, knowing what has always been true, and experiencing the Only Experience There Is. We call this, loosely, God.

The challenge here is that one cannot experience The Only Experience There Is if it is, in fact, the only experience there is. This is because in the absence of That Which Is Not, That Which IS, is not.

Put simply, in the absence of black, white is not. In the absence of cold, hot is not. In the absence of up, there is no such thing as down. None of these things can be experienced, save in relative terms. The same is true about God. And, for that matter, about the human soul. For the human soul IS God, in part. It is a holy and individuated part of That Which IS.

If there is nothing that is NOT That Which IS, then That Which IS cannot be known in Its own experience. Nor can any Part of It. It cannot be known in relative terms, but only in the Realm of the Absolute. And in the Realm of the Absolute, That Which IS cannot experience Its own magnificence. It cannot know the glory of Itself, the wonder of Itself, the Truth of Itself. This is the condition faced by your soul---and this is the reason that physical life as we know it was produced.

Physicality produced a solution to the conundrum - a solution that is ingenious and spectacular: *create an entire reality based on Illusion*. That phrase in itself, "reality" based on "illusion," is a contradiction in terms, but it gets the idea across.

And so we find ourselves in this Alice in Wonderland world (an Alice in Wonderland universe, really) in which we swear that what is So is Not So, and that what is Not So is So. It is a "wonderland" in the sense that it allows us to experience the True Wonder of Who We Really Are. We do this by calling forth the Opposite of Who We Are, and by experiencing ourselves in relation to that.

Suddenly, we have a point of reference by which we may know ourselves. (Remember that I said that the mission of the individual soul is to know itself as it truly is, in its own experience.)

All of this lays down the theological basis for my (finally!) direct answer to your direct question. That which is opposite to us, that which is "not us," exists for a very holy reason: so that we may announce and declare, express and experience, become and fulfill Who We Really Are. Therefore judge not, and neither condemn. Raise not your fist to the darkness, but be a light unto the darkness, and curse it not.

Our "mission" vis-a-vis people of other faiths is to accept them exactly as they are. Not to seek to convert them, not to judge them, and certainly not to condemn them.

Now Matt, you have placed your question inside a riddle that offers two choices---yet these choices are not, in truth, mutually exclusive. It does not have to be one or the other, as you have posed it. You have asked: "Should we try to show others what we consider 'true', or should we only try to share with others, learn from them, and build reciprocal friendships?" I believe we can do both.

As we share with others, learn from them, and build reciprocal friendships, we DO "show others what we consider true." In fact, that is the most effective way to show it! Thus, we set people free from their own limiting beliefs about us. This eventually

will set them free from their own limiting beliefs about *themselves*. Soon they, too, will know Who They Really Are.

And so, Matt, walk through the world not as one who seeks to convert or convince others of anything, but simply as one who seeks to know others as everything. When you know all of it as everything, then you know yourself as everything as well. You see yourself in every other person. Indeed, in every other thing that exists. Suddenly, the magnificence and the glory of Who You Are becomes apparent to you. It becomes part of your experience.

Many people have had this experience momentarily. They have had it in meditation, perhaps, or in a moment of pure silence, or in the midst of an impactful interaction with another (such as sexual union or laughing or crying together, or walking through the woods on a sunlight morning, or swimming in the ocean, or, simply, washing dishes.) I call this The Holy Experience. It is when we know Who We Really Are.

While many people have had this experience momentarily, the trick is to have it continually. That was the yearning of the Buddha. It was the journey of the Christ. It is the opportunity placed before each of us. Many Masters have shown us the way.

The way is for us to BE the way. "I am The Way and The Life. Follow me." This is what all Masters have declared. This is what all Students have understood. Therefore, do not look for your Master, BE the Master for whom you have been looking. Do not seek the Truth, BE the Truth you have been seeking. And do not attempt to change another, BE the change you wish to see.

That is your mission, Matt, and there is no other.

Bless you, Matt, with the knowing of Who You Really Are. May God be experienced through you, and in the living of your life.

Love always, and all ways...

neale.

So there you have it. In responding to Matt's inquiry I stumbled upon one definition of the Holy Experience. It is a definition that works for me. After all these years I can say that I know what I have been searching for since I was a child. I have been searching for the experience of knowing Who I Really Am.

All my life I have been trying to figure this out. Who am I? *What* am I? Why am I here? What am I supposed to be doing? Is there any reason for what I am doing? Does anybody care? Is there any *outcome*, other than the doing of it? What is the point of life?

These are the questions that plagued me as I tried to make some sense out of my life. There is a possibility that they have been plaguing you, too. If they have, boy, have you come to the right book.

Chapter Three

I said it before and I'll say it again. All my life I have been trying to figure out... Who am I? What am I? Why am I here? What am I supposed to be doing? Is there any reason for what I am doing? Does anybody care? Is there any *outcome*, other than the doing of it? What is the point of life?

The Holy Experience brings us the answers to those questions. The Holy Experience is the answer,

The Holy Experience is when you know the difference between Di-vinity and humanity, and *when that difference disappears*.

Divinity and humanity can become One in your experience, and when that occurs you have entered the Holy Moment. You cannot enter this Moment, however, until you know the difference - and why it exists.

The difference between Divinity and humanity is that Divinity seeks only to distribute, and humanity seeks only to gather.

Did you hear that?

That is not the only difference, of course, but it is a milestone difference. It is a major difference. So let's not gloss over it. Let's not read past it and move on, without really grasping its implication. Let's state it again. I said...

"The difference between Divinity and humanity is that Divinity seeks only to distribute, and humanity seeks only to gather."

Divinity understands that it is only through the distribution of Itself, the giving away of Itself, that it can be magnified and glorified. Humanity believes that it is only through the gathering to itself, the bringing to itself, that it can be magnified and glorified.

So there you have it. Giver and Gatherer. That's the difference.

It is an astonishing difference. It is an exact opposite. That is no small distinction. Yet when it is deeply understood (not simply casually comprehended), everything becomes wonderfully clear at last, and the chasm between the two may finally be closed.

Divinity seeks nothing for Itself. Human beings will find it difficult to seek nothing for themselves so long as they imagine themselves to be human. That is because humans imagine themselves to have needs. Di-vinity does not. Divinity has not such thought about Itself. (Nor any such thought about you, incidentally.)

So in order for humanity to seek nothing for itself, humans must understand themselves to be Divine. They must understand that humanity is not separate from the Divine, but IS the Divine, or a division of it.

You might say that humanity is a "division of the Divine." This helps people wrap

their minds around the concept of Oneness with Di-vinity. Many folks have a very difficult time seeing themselves as Divine. Yet if you tell them that they are *part* of that which is Divine, many people can go there. They can hang out in the place. They can embrace the concept. Partial magnificence is acceptable, total magnificence is not.

So we might say for our purposes here that humanity is a division of the Divine. That Which Is Divine created many divisions of Itself, and one of those divisions is called humanity.

Even as a large company or corporation may have a division here and a division there without any of those divisions being in any sense separate from, or *other than*, the whole, so, too, does the Divine have a di-vision here and a division there without any of those divisions being in any sense separate from, or *other than*, The Whole.

It is possible to be a division of something without being divided from it.

That's an important concept for you to grasp if you are to have the Holy Experience. Please let me say it again. I said...

"It is possible to be a division of something without being divided from it."

Think about that for a minute. Hold that concept in your mind.

Humanity, as a Division of Divinity, is neither separate from, nor other than, The Whole.

This is the one thing that most of humanity has not understood. This is the one thing that most of humanity's religions have not taught. In fact, most of those religions have taught exactly the opposite. They have taught that humanity IS Separate from Divinity. Some have called this separation The Fall of Man, and in that description they are correct. The idea of Hu-manity's Separation from Divinity HAS been humanity's downfall.

From Downfall to Upliftment: Reversing the Effect

The transformation of humanity's downfall into humanity's up-liftment may be achieved through a simple reversal of thinking. It is a shift from Separation Theology to Unity Spirituality. It is the reunion of God and Humanity.

It is easier to experience Reunion with God on an individual basis than it is collectively. That is because it takes a great deal more energy to alter Collective Consciousness than it does to alter Individual Conscious-ness. Yet Collective Consciousness can be altered when the alteration of Individual Consciousness reaches critical mass. When sufficient individual energies are lifted, the entire mass is elevated to a new level.

The work of Conscious Evolution, therefore, is the work of changing consciousness

at the individual level. *That is why every effort to do so is critical.*

Every individual undertaking, every individual thought, word, or action which leads to the transformation of the Self and to the lifting of any other being, is of extraordinary importance. It is not necessary to move mountains to move mountains. It is necessary only to move pebbles.

We must become People of the Pebbles. We must do our work on a person-to-person basis. Then we shall move mountains. Then the mightiest obstacles shall crumble, and the way shall be made clear.

So let us undertake to deeply understand, on an individual level (and then to *demonstrate* on an individual level) how and why it is possible for The Divine to want nothing for Itself, and to seek only to distribute.

We begin by coming to clarity on who and what The Divine is.

The Divine is Everything. All that is seen and all that is unseen is The Divine. All that is known and unknown is The Divine. All that is experienced and unexperienced is The Divine. All that is here and all that is not here, all that is now and all that is forever, all that is limited and all that is unlimited is The Divine. All that is comprehensible and all that is in-comprehensible is The Divine.

There is nothing that is that is not The Divine.

Divinity is everywhere at once, and thus, it is nowhere in particular. Divinity is NOWHERE. Divinity is NOW/HERE.

All of this has been given to us in *Conversations with God*. None of this is new. It has been given to us a thousand times before *Conversations with God*. It has been given to us a thousand times since. Indeed, in every moment in every way, through a thousand individual manifestations of Itself, is Divinity revealing Itself. Yet we do not see. Or we see, but do not believe.

We do not believe the evidence of our own eyes. We do not hear the truth in the sounds of silence.

Yet, for those who have ears to hear, listen.

And Watch.

Observe.

Observe the Self.

Watch over your Self.

Look at what you are doing on this day. Are you spending most of your energy gathering, or giving? And if you are giving, are you giving in order to gather? Do you do the work you do in order for it to pay off for you? And what, exactly, is the

payoff? What are you gathering?

God, of course, cannot gather. That is the one thing that God cannot do. God cannot gather anything. That is because everything God would gather, God is. There's nothing to gather.

I gather that you understand this.

What, then, to do?

Yet if God cannot gather, and if you are God, then you cannot gather, either. Perhaps you've already noticed this. Perhaps you've already noticed that, even if you do manage to collect a few things along the way, sooner or later it all disappears. At the end, none of it is there. You go on, but none of it goes with you. What is it that they say? "You can't take it with you."

In fact, it's all starting to disappear right now. You don't have the friends you had. You don't have the stuff you had. You don't even have the feelings you had. Everything you thought was "you", or that at least helped to define you, has disappeared. There is nothing that is permanent. There is nothing that stays. Everything goes.

Which is an interesting fact about life.

Everything goes.

And when you understand this, everything goes.

There are no restrictions anymore. You can do anything you wish, say anything you wish, think anything you wish, because you're not trying to hold onto anything anymore. What's the point? You can't hold onto it anyway. It's all going to go away. In the end, if not before.

This may sound like a desolate and despairing scenario, yet the truth is, it's liberating. You can't have anything forever. If you had it for-ever the having of it would mean nothing.

The Holy Experience is knowing this.

Each moment becomes truly holy, because each moment ends. It cannot be held onto forever. Not a single moment can. Therefore, every single moment is sacred. Like a snowflake, the moments fall and form a collection that melts into the stream of our lives that evaporates into nothingness, disappearing from sight but not from Reality, condensing and forming cloudy formations, spirits who then drop down like snow-flakes, starting the whole cycle over again.

Each snowflake is utterly magnificent, cryingly, achingly, tearfully beautiful, unfathomably perfect.

As is each life.

Chapter Four

I had the Holy Experience today. I had it this morning. I am still having it as I write this.

The experience feels interestingly like a new beginning. So many things are changing in our world, and so many things are presenting themselves for change in my life. I experienced this morning that I want to change how I am, becoming more loving, more patient, more compassion-ate, more giving.

Yes, much, much more giving.

This is wonderful, this feeling of willingness to change and to be-come a larger version of myself that I am having today. It is part of the continuing adventure, of the never-ending process, that is the expansion of my humanity and the evolution of my human soul.

Just when I think "the game is over," it never is! This is what is so extraordinary about Life. Even after what we imagine to be our death, life is not over. *It never is and it never will be.*

I don't know why I am feeling all this right now, why I am know-ing this as part of my experience today more than usual, but I am. It just feels like a new energy is coursing through me. And that feels good. I thank God for it. I thank God for letting me get up today with such revi-talized energy, even at my age. I am not a young man any more, but my heart feels young as ever.

I think that part of what is behind all of this may have to do with the fact that I spent the entire weekend going over the "script" of my life. No, I mean really, not figuratively. I had the screenwriter and the pro-ducer/director, and the director of photography of Conversations with God: The Movie at my house for the past three days going over the first draft of the script for the film, and that kind of experience can throw one into deep introspection, as you might imagine.

I haven't lived my life the way I would have liked to. I mean, I have made some choices that have been hurtful to others, and I so regret that. Yet I see now, as I review the entirety of my life, that certain things had to happen exactly as they have happened in order for me to be here now, just as I am. And I am clear that the God of my understanding forgives me completely and utterly for my offenses, holding me in the cradle of Her love, embracing me in the warmth of His compassion and deep under-standing, encouraging me now and giving me the strength to move for-ward with my mission in this life.

My mission is plain and it is simple: to give people back to them-selves. This is the mission of all of us, and each of us is playing it out in the way that is natural and perfect for us.

We have been sent here to experience and to express ourselves in the next grandest version of the greatest vision ever we held about Who We Are, that we might know ourselves as God would have us know us--as part of the Everlasting Divine. We have been given the gift of God's joy and God's peace in our heart, and offered an invitation to share it with everyone whose life we touch--regardless of exterior appearances that sometimes seem to make it impossible to do so.

I have come to see that all of life's circumstances, conditions, events, and experiences have been sent to me as gifts, creating a Contextual Field within which I might choose how I wish to experience myself, and decide what part of that interior experience I shall now express in physical form. And so I thank God for each and every manifestation of life now producing that Contextual Field. I shall judge not, and neither condemn.

This living without judgment is the hardest part for me, but it is the beginning of the Holy Experience, and as I have looked at the depth of my life these past three days it has been made clear to me that so many people would have to live without judgment of ME in order for me to feel the love that is all around me. And so, the least I can do in exchange for this unspeakable blessing is to offer the same in return, and to live without judgment of others. For who among us shall cast the first stone?

I was invigorated this morning by this freedom-giving thought: I am forgiven, by God and by all those who love me. I choose now to forgive myself as well, thus to dwell in the joyful place of enlivened creation. For nothing good is created from guilt, and all things wonderful emerge from joy.

What a joy this life is, with all its sadness and pain, its strife and travail, its tests and its obstacles. What a joy to be alive and experiencing all of it, and to be able to choose which part of it to internalize and call my own. Having this choice, and *exercising it*, is the Holy Experience.

The end is the beginning

I said in the last chapter that each moment in life is truly holy because each moment ends. This is not something that everyone knows. Everyone knows that each moment ends, but everyone does not know that for this reason each moment is holy.

And even while everyone knows that each *moment* ends, many people hope that no really wonderful *experience* ends. This is a contradiction in terms, yet people still engage in this wishing. They hope that their perfect relationship will never end, or that their perfect job will never end, or that their particular and present happiness, however it is showing up, will never end - *but it always does*. This does not mean that it will not or cannot be replaced by a new happiness, but the present happiness will always end.

That is something that is very important to remember. It is also important to know that the end of our present happiness is the beginning of our new happiness. Now if one's happiness is tied to present and particular circumstances, one's happiness is always and forever in jeopardy. Yet if one's happiness rides the tide of all events, and, indeed, *creates them*, then one has discovered and embraced the Holy Experience

It is the very *fact* that each moment is like a snowflake, breath-takingly beautiful, awesomely perfect in its design, absolutely individual and unlike any other, that makes it so remarkable, and renders it holy.

Do we not fall in love with people for this exact reason? Why not, then, fall in love with moments in precisely the same way? *Deciding to do that is the beginning of the Holy Experience.* It is the Choice Point of Sacred Creation.

The power and the inspiration

There is nothing more profoundly inspiring and absolutely em-powering than this fact that each moment is new. It is born, it lives, and dies, in NOW.

Right here, right Now, is each moment born. Right here, right Now, is each moment lived. Right here, right Now, is each moment ended. It is all happening at one Time, *in this moment, right Now.*

The wonder of all this is that This Moment can be recreated from moment to moment, or created in a new way, with whatever modifica-tions, enhancements, alterations, or adjustments that we choose.

We are not who we were yesterday. We are not even who we were a moment ago. Nothing is. And yet it can be, if we choose for it to be. All we need do is recreate it.

In life we can recreate ourselves as we just were, or we can recreate ourselves anew, in the next moment. We are always remaking ourselves. It is never a question of whether, but of how. Are we recreating ourselves as we were before, or in the *next grandest version of the greatest vision ever we held about Who We Are?*

The Holy Experience is the experience of recreation. It is the experi-ence of Total Knowing that the Totality of You is Never Known. It cannot be, because it has not yet been created.

Understanding infinity

Everything that ever was, is now, and ever will be, is now. And so, in the language of the Realm of the Absolute, there is nothing that has not been created. Only in the language of the Realm of the Relative could the statement be made that the Totality of You cannot be known because it has not yet been created.

In truth, all of You has been created. Yet all of You has not yet been experienced by the individuated part of You that is the localized expression of the Universal Self.

The only way for the individuated part of You that is the localized expression of the Universal Self to experience all of You is to recreate parts of You until all of You has been Known. Yet the All of You is infinite and eternal. Therefore, it cannot be known or experienced in any relative sense, but only in an Absolute Way. Since the Local You does not know that it is the Universal You, it imagines that it is creating, rather than recre-ating, itself in each moment. This is its conceit.

The Holy Experience is the dropping of this conceit. It is the shed-ding of this illusion. It is the lowering of this veil. This happens when we come to know that we are not

who we thought we were. It occurs when we understand that we are nothing at all, except exactly what we are right here, right now. And that we can change that at our absolute discretion.

Who are you right now? What are you? Are you confused? Are you frustrated, finding all this difficult to follow? Are you annoyed that you are not "getting it," or overjoyed that you are?

You are none of these things unless you say that you are. And you cease to be these things the moment that you say you are not. That moment is the holy moment. That experience is the Holy Experience.

When you understand the truth of Who You Are, you understand infinity. You can actually experience this understanding. That is, you can embrace it not only intellectually, but experientially.

There are at least five areas in which you can do so. Many more, I am sure, but five that I can immediately think of. You can experience in-finity in:

1. **Love**
2. **Wisdom**
3. **Abundance**
4. **Energy**
5. **Divinity**

These five areas of life expression have, in my mind as I think of them, several sub-areas. And so the complete listing looks to me like this:

1. **Love/Relationship/Sexuality**
2. **Wisdom/Awareness/Consciousness**
3. **Abundance/Wealth/Health**
4. **Energy/Creativity/Aliveness**
5. **Divinity/Joy/Peace**

These are the areas of life expression in which it is possible to en-counter or create the Holy Experience. But before we get into that, let me see if I can more closely describe the Holy Experience by more broadly de-fining it.

The whole is greater than the sum of its parts

I have already given several indications in this manuscript of what I believe the Holy Experience is. Now let me say, please, that it is all of this—and more.

The Holy Experience is as varied and as infinite as Life. It is a par-ticular aspect of Life that explains life TO life through the process of life itself.

The Holy Experience is the experience of knowing, and of knowing that you know. It is the experience of being, and of being what you are be-ing. It is the experience of having, and of having what you have.

I know that all of this may sound like just so much gobbledegook—circular talk getting nowhere—but if you will have a little patience, I think you will be well rewarded.

When I speak of the experience not only of "knowing," but of "knowing that you know," I am speaking of two distinctly different en-counters with life.

CwG tells us that there are those who...

...do not know, and do not know that they do not know.

...do not know, and know that they do not know.

...do not know, but think that they know.

...know, but do not know that they know.

...know, but pretend that they do not know.

...know, and know that they know.

All of us fall into one of these six categories. So it is one thing to know, and another thing to know that you know.

Now the truth is that all of us know all that there is to know. Yet not all of us remember this, and so we have the experience of not knowing, or of knowing, but of not knowing that we know. In the moment that we know, and know that we know, we have had the Holy Experience.

Because this experience is so vast, it is almost more difficult not to have it than to have it. Yet most people still manage to not have it—even though half the world is yearning for it. That is because half the world does not understand that it is yearning for that which it already has.

For instance, peace.

The world's people yearn for peace, yet they do not experience it, nor do they demonstrate it. That is because they do not understand that they are peace. And in denying that which they intrinsically are, they deny themselves the experience of it.

This is what I meant when I said, just a bit ago, that the Holy Ex-perience is being, and of being what you are being. To give you an exam-ple of what this means, or of how this could "show up" in real life, I can remember my father raising his voice at me in frustration when I was in high school because of the poor grades I kept bringing home.

"You're smarter than this," he would say, waving my report card at me. He was right. It was one thing for me to "be" smart (I was), but quite another for me to be being smart in my daily life - that is, to be acting like that. I was not demonstrating what I was, I was not demonstrating what my father knew me to be. I was IT, but I was not being IT.

To be or not to be, that is the question.

Similarly, it is one thing to have everything in life, but if you are "having none of it" (that is, if you do not believe that you have it, or cannot acknowledge that you have it), then you may as well not have it at all. You will not experience having it because you are not willing to "have" what you have. You are not willing to hold what you have been given.

That is why the marriage vow says "to have and to hold." You can have something, but if you do not hold it, it is just the same as not having it at all. It is as if someone had given you a great gift, but you dropped it the moment you got your hands on it. You let go of it. You still have it. It is still in your possession. The person who gave it to you has long since disappeared. But you will not pick it up and hold it. And so it lies there at your feet, as useless as if you did not have it at all.

I cannot tell you how many people I have seen ignoring their talents in exactly this way. They have been given great gifts, but they will not pick them up, they will not use them.

And so the Holy Experience is knowing that you know, being what you are, and having what you have. It is a large experience. It is a huge experience. It is the experience of who you are, writ large.

Is the Holy Experience something you create?

Okay, now I said earlier that there are five areas in which it is possible to encounter or create the Holy Experience. You may have read that sentence and glossed over the word "create." You may not have given it a second thought. But let's think about it now.

Is the Holy Experience something that we create? Whoa. For many, many people that would be a new thought. A whole new thought. Because many people think of the Holy Experience as something that comes over us, or something that we encounter along the way. It is something we stumble on, or open ourselves to through prayer or meditation or fasting or the like. But it is not something that we consciously create.

Yet it can be. It is true, we can encounter the Holy Experience or we can create it. If we wait to encounter it, it might be years, perhaps a life-time, before we do so - IF we do so. Yet if we choose to create it, we do not have to wait one moment longer. We can have it right here, right now.

I know of five steps to creating the Holy Experience:

- 1. Believing that it is possible for you to have it**
- 2. Understanding that you are worthy of having it**
- 3. Knowing that you are having it**
- 4. Declaring that you are having it**
- 5. Sharing it with others, so that they may have it**

We will explore each of these steps in the next five chapters, and in the five chapters following that we will look at the areas of life expression in which you can create the Holy Experience if you now choose to.

Chapter Five

The first step in creating the Holy Experience is believing that it is possible for you to have it.

Now you may think that this is an elementary step—almost a given. Yet many people find this a very difficult step because they find it hard to believe that any kind of “holy experience” can happen to them.

(1) Some believe it is impossible to have the Holy Experience because they do not believe that such an experience even exists.

(2) Others believe it is impossible to have such an experience because, while it may exist, they do not know what it is or how to access it. They believe it is understandable and accessible only to aescetics and monks and holy ones—people who have devoted their entire lives to the search for inner truth and higher realities.

(3) Finally, still others believe that while it may be accessible to regular, ordinary people, they, themselves are not worthy. They believe this for one reason or another. Some feel that there is something specific that a person has to be, do, or have in order to enter into the Holy Experience. It is reserved for a special class of people who, while they may be ordinary, are single-minded in their determination to know of this experience, and are clear that their particular doctrine—which tells them that there is only one way to have the Holy Experience—is absolute and correct and is to be applied without exception. Others feel that because of their own behavior in this life they are not sufficiently “holy” to have the experience in any event.

It is with these varying ideas that people approach the Holy Experience—and life itself. And ideas, of course, rule all human experience. The idea that one has about anything produces one’s reality around that. And where do ideas have their birth? In how you look at things. Your perspective about a thing is what creates your idea about it.

I have become more and more clear about this with every passing year since the publication of the first Conversations with God book in 1995—ten years ago to this writing. And now, in the latest and final dialogue book, Home with God (ATRIA Books, March 2006), this progression is described specifically.

According to the text:

Perspective creates perception, and perception creates experience. The experience that perception creates for you is what you call “truth.”

Because I know this I try very hard these days to look at everything from the perspective of my highest desire. This means not looking at things through the prism of what I expect or imagine or think realistically will happen, but rather, seeing things as I choose and desire for them to happen.

This is not easy. I find that I have been programmed by society itself to look for the

worst in everything, to anticipate the least desirable outcome, to worry about and fret about and agonize over how bad things can be, rather than how good something could turn out. I have had to fight this tendency toward pessimism all my life. What's funny about this is that I am at the very same time the supreme optimist. I believe that I walk in luck, that God is always with me, that everything good happens to me, and that I can get out of anything—any jam, any situation—and land on my feet.

So how these two sides of me got juxtaposed I don't know, but they are. Fortunately for me the positive side shows itself 80% of the time and the negative just 20% of the time—but both sides are definitely there. So I have to remember to think positively and eliminate negative thoughts from my mental diet.

(Incidentally, a wonderful help in this regard is the book *Ask and It Is Given*, by Jerry and Esther Hicks. It shows you how you can use your feelings as creative tools, and I highly recommend it.)

Positive thinking about the Holy Experience

Now when it comes to anything having to do with God I have been blessed with absolute faith. I am utterly convinced that (a) there IS a God; (b) God is “on my side”; (c) the power of God can be used at all times in the creation of my inner reality and my outer experience.

Because I believe this, the idea of my having the Holy Experience is not even a little bit of a stretch for my imagination. I know that this experience exists and I feel sure that I can have it. I am convinced that I am going to have it. I believe that everyone has the opportunity to have it. I believe that it is ours for the asking. The result of this is that I enter into the Holy Experience on a regular basis. My next goal, my next step, is to remain in it much more of the time, to live in it, to have my being within it and to come from it in the day-to-day of my life.

If you are in this place of mind as well, or if you can go to this place now, you have taken the first step toward having the Holy Experience. Yet how can you go to this place if you do not know that it exists, or doubt that you are worthy of being there? Those are the key questions. Let's take the second one first.

The issue of worthiness

This may very well be the biggest stumbling block of all. At first blush you may think that not many people believe themselves to be “unworthy” of holy encounters (or of much of anything, actually), but you would be amazed to find that low self-esteem and lack of self-worth are among the most prevalent mental and emotional afflictions (along with loneliness) suffered by people in the world today. This is especially true in terms of our relationship with God.

Why?

It is really quite simple.

Many millions of people have been raised to believe that they were born in

“original sin.” That is, insofar as God is concerned, they were unworthy at birth. This, they have been told by their religion. Therefore “unworthiness” is, for many people, an article of faith. Not to believe in one’s own unworthiness is not to believe in the Word of God.

Other religions teach us, as well, that we are all sinners, and while they may not claim that we were unworthy at birth, they now pretty much agree that life in human form has turned us into less-than-perfect beings, unworthy of sitting at the right hand of God the Father Almighty unless we are saved.

Indeed, most religions, not only just a few, teach that some form of purification is required in order to qualify for entry into the Kingdom of Heaven. Paradise, it seems, comes at a price.

We must all, we are told, repent of our sins and walk the narrow path. How many of us have done so with sufficient success to meet the requirements of God is arguable—or so conventional wisdom goes.

It is not difficult to understand, given these continuous teachings from our elders, how it comes to pass that millions upon millions of people do indeed think of themselves as unworthy to meet God—and meeting God, of course, is what the Holy Experience is all about.

Defining the experience

Oh, yes, perhaps we have not made that clear before. That IS what we are talking about here. That is what we are discussing. When we talk about the Holy Experience we are talking about meeting God. It is a face-to-face meeting, too, not something that exists only in conceptual constructs. We are talking about looking at Divinity directly, seeing it right there in front of us, knowing it as part of us, experiencing it as integral to us, and merging into this experience as our felt reality.

This is precisely the experience that we have following our death, and God has made it clear to us that we are not required to wait until death in order to have it. We may embrace—and, indeed, create—this experience at any time. But we must feel that it is possible, and that we are worthy, to do so.

How, then, to shake off our own thoughts of unworthiness?

The first step is to re-identify ourselves. We must decide again—and for many decide anew—who we are. So long as we imagine that we are other than who we really are, thoughts of our unworthiness will be possible. The moment that we re-identify ourselves, assuming our true and real identity, the idea of unworthiness as it relates to us becomes impossible to conceive.

Ending separation

Currently, most people imagine themselves to be separate from God, from each other, and from everything else that is. In truth, we are all intrinsically connected with everything—including that which we call Divinity. When we drop our idea of

Separation—which is part of what I have called the Earth’s “Separation Theology”—any thoughts of our unworthiness drop with it.

Robert Heinlein, the famous science-fiction writer, included a line, said many times by many characters, in his novel, *Stranger in a Strange Land*. The line was, “Thou art God.” In his book, Heinlein had many people greeting and saying goodbye to each other in this way. The line, and the book itself, though meant to be “fiction,” offers a powerful statement of what is really so.

On the day that you embrace your True Identity as Divinity Demonstrated you will abandon forever your thought that you are somehow not “up to” the Holy Experience, or being included in God’s Kingdom.

God’s Kingdom is right here on Earth, and the Holy Experience is life itself, lived as a demonstration of the unity of everything, in joyous celebration of the wonder and the glory of All That Is.

Many people have a very difficult time with this idea of their Oneness with God, however, and this makes it virtually impossible for them to drop their idea of separation from God and embrace their true worthiness at last.

In *Home with God* this matter is addressed head on. Here’s a preview of what the dialogue with God in that soon-to-be-published book reveals...

I’ve often heard the analogy that I am, to God, as a wave is to the ocean. The same stuff, exactly. Just smaller in size.

That analogy has indeed been used many times, and it is not inappropriate. So now, let us define this “ocean.” Let us propose here that God is The Creator. Very few people who believe in a God at all have an argument with that.

If it is true that God is The Creator, this means that you, too, are a creator. God creates all of life, and you create all of your life. It’s that simple.

If you think of it that way you can hold it in your consciousness.

You and God are creating all the time—you on the micro level, God on the macro. Are you clear?

Yes, I see! There is no separation between the wave and the ocean. None. The wave is one part of the ocean, acting in a certain way. The wave does the same thing the ocean does, in smaller degree.

That is exactly correct. You are me, acting the way you are acting. I give you the power to act as you are acting. Your power comes from me. Without the ocean, the wave does not have the power to be a wave. Without me, you do not have the power to be you. And without you, my power is not made manifest. Your joy is to make me manifest. The joy of

humanity is to manifest God.

Now there's a statement.

Here's another...

Life is God, made physical.

What is important to understand is that there is no single way in which life makes God physical. Some waves are small, barely a ripple, while other waves are huge, thunderous in their sweep. Yet, whether minuscule or monstrous, there is always a wave. There is no time when there is not a wave on the ocean. And while every wave is different, not a single one is divided from the ocean itself.

Difference does not mean division. Those words are not interchangeable.

You are different from God, but you are not divided from God. The fact that you are not divided from God is why you can never die.

The wave lands on the beach, but it does not cease to be. It merely changes form, receding back into the ocean.

The ocean does not get "smaller" every time a wave hits the sand. Indeed, the incoming wave demonstrates, and therefore reveals, the ocean's majesty. Then, by receding into the ocean, it restores the ocean's glory.

The presence of the wave is evidence of the existence of the ocean.

Your presence is evidence of the existence of God.

Chapter Six

The second step in creating the Holy Experience is **under-standing that you are worthy of having it.**

We touched upon this briefly in the preceding chapter. You might say that the first step in creating the Holy Experience is believing that such a thing is possible, and the second step is believing that such a thing is possible for *you*.

As I said in Chapter 5, most people who suffer from unworthiness around this picked up their thoughts from religion. Many people have been told that they are sinners, that they were born in sin, and that they will die in sin, their only hope for salvation being their constant call for forgiveness, and God's mercy in granting it.

Others have been told that even if they were worthy of seeing God—which is what the Holy Experience is all about—they would not be able to see God anyway, because God is so magnificent and utterly unfathomable that God *cannot* be seen, comprehended, or experienced.

Conversations with God tells us that both of these premises are false.

No one is "born in sin." Indeed, sin itself does not exist. There is no such thing as "offending" God. Nor is God subject to stress, anger, frustration, or disappointment. That is simply not the nature of That Which Is Divine.

Perhaps this is a good juncture at which to undertake a brief review of just who and what God is.

In *The New Revelations* we were told...

"God is not a singular Super Being, living somewhere in the Universe or outside of it, having the same emotional needs and subject to the same emotional turmoil as humans. That Which Is God cannot be hurt or damaged in any way, and so, has no need to seek revenge or impose punishment."

We are told something else there as well, something perhaps a bit more unexpected:

"God needs nothing. God requires nothing in order to be happy. God is happiness itself. Therefore, God requires nothing of anyone or anything in the universe."

Now if these statements are true (and I believe they are), there is no reason for us to worry about God being angry with us, nor to assess ourselves unworthy of God's love, or of God's presence in our lives, or of the Holy Experience.

Two years later, in *Tomorrow's God*, we were given an even more comprehensive close-up view of God and the nature of Divinity, with some of the earlier revelations being essentially repeated, but with new ones added. Few of the ideas found there, however, are held by the majority of people in today's society. Nearly all of these concepts violent most people's most fundamental beliefs about God. Yet if we were to embrace these concepts, I believe that our whole lives would change.

Here is what that extraordinary text tells us:

- *Tomorrow's God does not require anyone to believe in God.*
- *Tomorrow's God is without gender, size, shape, color, or any of the characteristics of an individual living being.*
- *Tomorrow's God talks with everyone, all the time.*
- *Tomorrow's God is separate from nothing, but is Everywhere Present, the All In All, the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the Sum Total of Everything that ever was, is now, and ever shall be.*
- *Tomorrow's God is not a singular Super Being, but the extra-ordinary process called Life.*
- *Tomorrow's God is ever changing.*
- *Tomorrow's God is needless.*
- *Tomorrow's God does not ask to be served, but is the Servant of all of Life.*
- *Tomorrow's God will be unconditionally loving, non-judgmental, non-condemning, and non-punishing.*

Stepping away from arrogance

Given all that we have now come to know about God, any thoughts of unworthiness melt away. This assumes, of course, that we *accept* these new understandings and embrace them as truth.

In order to do this we would have to be willing to step away from practically everything we have been told in the past about God and ourselves. We would have to consider the possibility that there may be something we do not know about God, the knowing of which would change everything.

We would have to give up our spiritual arrogance.

That may seem like a strong phrase to use, and it may not even apply to you, individually. Yet the fact is that the vast majority of the world's people who believe in a God are, in fact, spiritually arrogant, in the sense that they have adopted as their particular conceit the idea that all there is to know about God is now known, all there is to understand about God is now understood, and all there is to explore and say about God has been explored and said.

It is all right there, they will tell you, in the doctrines and dogmas of their particular religion. It's a complete road map, and all we have to do is follow it. It's the surest path to our salvation. Indeed, say some, it is the *only path*.

Yet that path has not brought humanity to its salvation, but rather, to its knees. It is time now to do something that we have not been willing to do. It is time to *question the prior assumption*. Our prior ideas about God and Life and each other may very well be incomplete. I do not believe that they are "wrong," but I do believe that there is more to know, that there are gaps to close, that there are blanks to fill in our understanding of who we are, who God is, and what life is all about. I believe that the gathering of this knowledge (presuming that we have the courage to do so), the closing of these gaps, and the filling in of these blanks will render obsolete all question of your worthiness for the Holy Experience.

Forgiving ourselves

Yet even if we accept that God will never judge us and never has, there is still the question of our own self-judgment—the harshest judgment of all.

And so a major process for us, a huge portion of our internal work and of our personal preparation for the Holy Experience, has to do with self-forgiveness. Almost always, it is easier for people to embrace the idea that God forgives them than it is to forgive themselves. We have a whole list of "wrongs" we imagine ourselves to have done in our lives, and we can't forget them.

We, and only we, know the inner workings of our mind, the quiet scheming of our heart, the sad assessment of our soul, as we look at our lives and give ourselves a grade.

The trick here is not to try to forget them, but to do just the opposite. Remember them, and remember them vividly – for it is what you resist that persists, and what you look at that disappears. That is, it ceases to have its illusory form.

Remember all of your alleged wrong-doings, then do two things at once: (a) agree with yourself never to repeat those behaviors again, and (b) allow yourself to let go of any guilt you have about them, replacing all guilt with regret.

Guilt and fear are the only enemies of man. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross used to say that (it was one of her most oft-used lines), and she was profoundly right. So get over your guilt about what you've done in the past. Get over it. Get over it.

Get over it.

All of us have made mistakes – and for some of us they have been some pretty big whoppers – but that has nothing to do with your worthiness to see God, to be loved by God, and to have the Holy Experience.

Indeed, part of the Holy Experience is understanding that.

Chapter Seven

The third step in creating the Holy Experience is **knowing that you are having it**.

In truth, one does not *create* the Holy Experience at all (nor, for that matter, does one create anything). One simply shifts one's perspective, allowing one to notice that the experience is already occurring and is just waiting for us to notice it.

All things that are now, have ever been, or ever will be, *are now*. In our Timeless Multiverse (we do not live in simply one Universe, but in a multiplicity of universes—something that science is about to tell us), nothing will ever be created again. Everything already exists in the Eternal Moment of Now. It was *all created at once!* Ours is to merely reach into that Moment and all that it contains and, with the tool of our perspective, pull out anything that we wish. Like a magician pulling a rabbit from a hat, so, too, do we experience the wonder and the magic of Life.

Remarkably, few people are aware that they are now having the Holy Experience. There are two reasons for this.

1. Most people do not know what the Holy Experience is.
2. Most people do not know what they are.

Our extraordinarily limited perspective allows us only a very limited perception. You can only see what you are able to see. Thomas Aquinas put this eternal truth wonderfully in his *Summa Theologica* when he said: "The thing known is in the knower according to the mode of the knower." Total Knowledge, True Knowledge, is not possible for Aspects of Being or Individuations of Divinity of limited perspective—and *all Individuations of Divinity hold a limited perspective of Ultimate Reality by virtue of the fact that they are Individuations*.

Yet all is not lost, for the degree to which one's perspective may expand is, in human terms, beyond extraordinary, and, in cosmic terms, virtually unlimited. This presents

a dichotomy, for how can a thing which is inherently limited be virtually unlimited? The solution to the paradox lies in the fact that we are unlimited in what we can ultimately know and experience of ourselves—and the moment we know and experience all that there is to know and experience, we will immediately create more to know and experience. So we can know our Selves completely, and the moment we know our Selves completely, we do not. We accomplish this neat trick by simply changing the definition of “completely.” Only a God could do this, and that is, of course, exactly who we are.

Reversing the paradigm

Earlier I said that “knowing” you are having the Holy Experience is the third step in “creating it.” Some people will see this as a juxtaposition of knowing and creating, and, of course, it is exactly that. Such a juxtaposition is required when we speak (as most of us usually do) within the limited understandings of our current perspective.

Allow me to explain.

Many people believe that creation precedes knowing. That is, we create a thing, and then we know about it. This is how it seems to work in the actual living of our lives. Yet what I am saying here is exactly the opposite. We cannot create anything that we do not know about. Knowing precedes creation, and produces it. This is a reversal of the paradigm within which we experience ourselves. With such a reversal comes a complete turnaround in our experience.

Knowing is part of the act of creation. It is the first part. It is what must happen before anything else can happen. When one thinks about it logically, it becomes obvious that this is true.

Conversations with God tells us that the three Tools of Creation are:

- **Thought**
- **Word**
- **Deed**

The first step in the creation of anything is to have an idea about it. An idea about something is your Thought about it. It is what you “know” about it. So, knowing is the beginning of creation.

That initial thought may come to you in First Form as a picture, or a feeling. Eventually, you shape that thought into a Word, or several words, or many. This is the second Tool of Creation.

Finally, you turn your Words into Action—the third Tool of Creation—and you have creation.

This is an elementary way of understanding the process of life. It is an extremely primitive perspective. Yet it works. For people living within the paradigm of an extraordinarily limited perspective, this crude device, these three very crude tools, can seem like magic.

In truth, as I have said here, there is no such thing as Creation, there is only a Knowing that everything has already been created, and that ours is to merely Call It Forth. This is a higher level of understanding, and is demonstrated through consistent and predictable physical manifestation by very few people, whom we have called masters and avatars. The rest of us may produce such demonstrations on occasion (perhaps even on several occasions, but rarely on many and never on every), and such moments inevitably lead us to deeper comprehension.

Deeper comprehension is, of course, the Holy Experience. It is Knowing more fully, through the demonstration of it, Who We Really Are.

Thus it is possible for everyone, and not only masters, to have the Holy Experience (or, in more accurate terms, to Know that we are always having it). This, of course, is the promise of God, and the pledge of all true religions.

Knowing you are having the Holy Experience is as simple as knowing that you are Life. All people know they are living, but few people know they are life. And what is life? *A process.*

You are, therefore, a process.

Knowing what you are

Very few people think of themselves in this way. They may think of themselves as something that IS, but they seldom stop to ask themselves, "*is what?*"

Others think of themselves as a being, a sentient biological creature. Yet they seldom stop to ask themselves, a creature being what?

Still others say that they are not their body, but rather, they are that which is using the body as a tool. But a tool in the creation of what? Themselves, they say. Yet what is that? They will not know until they have created it, they say. And they are right. Profoundly right.

And so, we are all nothing more than a process. We are also nothing less, which is saying a great deal. For we are the process called Life—and that is All There Is.

Our identity becomes more clear to us when we really hear those last words—because "all there is" is but another way of saying, "*God.*"

Putting this into practice

None of this verbal explanation will mean anything, of course, if we cannot put it into practice. None of it has any use if we cannot place it on the ground, minute to minute, in our every day lives. Ruminations can be fascinating, but they carry no practical value if we cannot make them live and breathe and manifest in our reality.

From *rumin*ation to *man*ifestation—that is the journey. From our thought about ourselves to our experience of ourselves—that is the path. It is the path upon which the Soul is embarked eternally. It is the Eternal Joy of God.

Putting esoteric wisdom into practice and making it part of our daily lives is the greatest opportunity we will ever have—and we have it every moment. It is the opportunity to know and experience our divinity.

Practicing Esoterism is a lifelong undertaking. Very, very, very few people attempt it. Most do not even know it is there to attempt. They are far too busy simply staying alive. That is why it is the first duty of every society that would call itself enlightened to lighten the load of those who barely survive. What we will do for the least among us tells us everything about what we will do as a species.

When the least among many can take their minds off of the constant worry and anxiety of day-to-day survival, they can at last turn their attention to achieving a larger understanding of the matters that will make simple survival a given. This is the means by which is accomplished the transformation of an entire society.

Personal and societal transformation is arduous. It is immensely challenging. It is not the work of the feint of heart or the weak-spirited. It is the last step in having the Holy Experience.

The next step is declaring that one is going to do just that.

The words God and life and you are interchangeable.